

JENISON HISTORY

July 2014

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www.jenisonhistory.org

JENISON HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION
PO Box 664
Jenison, Michigan 49429
TELEPHONE
(616) 457-4398

BLISSVELDT FARM

TRANSCRIPT WRITTEN BY VIRGINIA TIMMER FOR AN INTERVIEW
WITH WCET IN 1998

On what is now Port Sheldon Road, was the Blissveldt Farm. Nelson Bliss married Altha Jenison, sister of Hiram and the Twins, Lucius and Luman of the pioneer family who settled in Jenison. the name Blissveldt is after Nelson Bliss and Veldt is the Dutch word for farm.

Ben and Bessie Husband Hanchett became owners around 1910. Ben's mother was Betsy Jenison Hanchett, a sister of Altha Jenison Bliss. The 1915 Hanchett movie entitled "Blissveldt Romance" starts at the farm and shows the Interurban passenger depot.

Prize Holstein cattle and horses were of the best breed and were recognized throughout the State. Persons throughout the area could board the interurban. It stopped behind the big barn and milk-house. Ben Hanchett loved being at his farm and often stayed in quarters behind the old farmhouse. If wife Bessie came along, they might stay in the cottage at 424 Port Sheldon on Rush Creek that was part of the farm property as was the house at 300 Port Sheldon which was a tenant house. In 1935, two years after Ben Hanchett's death, an auction sale was held and much of the farm property and cattle were sold. In 1940, the property reverted back to Mrs. Bessie Hanchett. From then on, the farm had a series of superintendents who were prominent in the life of the Jenison community.

About 1930, Clarence Vredeveld learned Hanchett needed help. There was an opening in the dairy at Blissveldt Farm, so he worked there 3 1/2 years.

After Bessie Hanchett's death in 1960, the farm was purchased by John and Elizabeth Huizenga who employed three full time hands.

The daily schedule started at 4 AM. They milked

(Continued Page 2)

Our mission is to learn about Jenison history, obtain artifacts relating to its history, and maintain the Jenison Historical Museum as a place to share and display our heritage.

Bossime
(No. 7385)
"He's a Belgian"



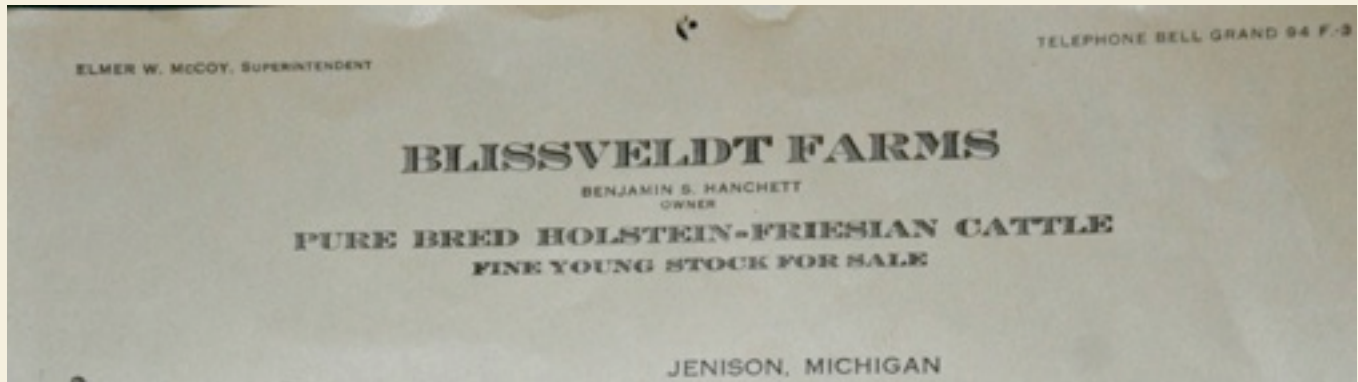
"Sweet Friend Aaggie"
Champion Butter Cow
of Michigan 1912-1913



Pictures of some favored
livestock from the Blissveldt
Farms Letterhead



(CON'T)



6-7:30 AM and 4:30-6 PM, and if a third was necessary, that was at noon. They milked an average of 45-50 cows and also had to tend to young stock and heifers.

The milk was loaded on a milk wagon and another fellow drove the truck every morning at 6 AM. Most of their milk went to Blodgett Hospital and to East Grand Rapids people. It was Grade A Raw Milk. There was no pasteurizing in those days. Milk had to be delivered every day, 7 days a week.

They went home for breakfast about 7:30 AM, then returned to do the chores and washing of the milking equipment until about 11:30, they had a 2 1/2 hour noon. They got done about 6 PM. This was 7 days a week, although Sundays they just did necessary chores, so had a few more hours off on Sunday and a whole Sunday off every 2-3 weeks.

The milk was separated into 3%, 4% or 5% butterfat. It went through a separator. Some was sold as cream or whipping cream. There was a flowing well that cooled the milk as there was no refrigeration, but they had ice they would throw into the flowing well to help keep it cold. When the Interurban ran behind the barn, it would pick up some of the milk.

People would get on the Interurban to ride out to Blissveldt Farm, mostly on

sundays and holidays, just to look, to buy or to sell. There were a lot of visitors. They would take the next Interurban back home.

They were very much government inspected. They came very often unannounced. If they found out things weren't clean, you had to clean it or lose your license. They would come once a day, once a week or once in 6 weeks.

All the utensils were put in a steamer for 20 minutes. By the time I started working there, we had 4 milking machines that would milk 2 cows each at once. Then we had to hand strip the rest of the milk from the cows.

Sometimes a cow would give us trouble. They would start kicking, sometimes kicking the milking machine away or the can of milk. We had one cow we had to tie up every time we milked her. If a stranger came into the barn, the cows would give us trouble. We had to get to know the cows personally. Each cow was fed a certain amount of grain, a mixture of grains, some hay and so forth. We had very little trouble with diseases because of the regular inspections. A cow would be removed immediately if something was wrong.

The farmhouse was across the road from the big cow barn. Behind the house were other barns and living quarters. There were also living quarters in the

big barn across from the farmhouse. Mr. John J. Piers took care of all the office work. He was bookkeeper, treasurer, everything, and took care of all the office work from his office at one end of the L & L Jenison Store.

Other big farms in the area were Cedar Crest, Wallinwood and Closterhouse.

signed,

Virginia Timmer, 1998

July Riverboat Ride

Tickets must be purchased in advance,

no ticket sales at the gate.

For more information see page 5 of this newsletter.

July 19, 2014 Noon to 2 PM
Limited Seating

Be sure to get yours before the seats sell out.

Contact Liz Timmer to order
457-3708

September October 2014

Glimpses of Hudsonville

Mark your calendars for the upcoming September and October Open Houses where we will explore some of the history of our neighbors to the west...Hudsonville.

Watch the calendar on the web for more upcoming events.
(www.jenisonhistory.org)

We look forward to seeing you, and if you would like to volunteer to help at any of these events, please contact the museum at 457-4398 or email us at info@jenisonhistory.org.

Considering Membership in JHA?

If you are not a dues paying

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

member, please consider joining to help support the Association. Dues are a bargain at only \$10 per year, you will receive monthly updates to the happenings of the Association. Contact the JHA at info@jenisonhistory.org or calling the museum

616-457-4398

Web Site:

Keep up to date by stopping by our website for a list of the our meeting and Open House dates and times by visiting (www.jenisonhistory.org)

Restoration Fund

Stop by and see the wonderful restoration of the Garfield print, made possible by the generous donations of a few of our members.

Jenison Museum Souvenir's

Our newest souvenir ornament is now available for sale. This year we are highlighting the Jenison Mill.



Our previous design is also still available



Prices:

New design \$15 each

Previous design \$12 each

Purchase one of each for \$25

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Museum Cleaning: This is a big job, as you can well imagine, that needs constant attention in order to have the museum look it's best during the open houses. Contact any board member if you can lend a few hours.

Tour Guides: The school tours are a great way of teaching the children about our history and is such a rewarding experience. You won't regret being a part of this experience for our local children.

Joyce Klawiter would love to hear from you.

And the list goes on...

Monthly Open Houses, Theme's for Open Houses, Inventory, Museum Maintenance, board trustee.

You can come to a monthly meeting or reach out to any board member if you would like to volunteer in any particular area.

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For more information see the next page of this newsletter.

July 19, 2014

Noon to 2 PM

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For Sale at the Museum

Jenison Museum Note Pads	\$ 1.50
Stationary with Envelopes	\$ 2.00
Book: Bend in the River	\$10.00
Book: At the Bend	\$ 4.00
Mill Print (unframed)	\$10.00
Jenison at the Bend CD	\$10.00
Historical Prints:	
Large	\$10.00
Small	\$ 7.50

Souvenir Ornament: 2014 \$15.00

Souvenir Ornament: 2012 \$12.00

Purchase one of each ornament for \$25

Available during any open house, or call the Museum at 457-4398

JHA TRUSTEE'S

Chair/Membership

Liz Timmer (16)
457-3708

Vice Chair/Curator

Ken Williams (14)
772.6523

Treasurer/Editor

Ruth Lowing (14)
896-1447

Social Secretary

Nellie DeLaat (16)
457-1193

Recording Secretary

Linda Droog (15)
457-3016

Tours/Co-Archivist

Joyce Klawiter
457-9018

Co-Archivist

Barb Semeyn (14)
457-9343

Maintenance/Historian

Mike Timmer (16)
531-1218

Trustee

Yvonne Williams (14)
772-6523
Gene Kort (16)
534-6769

Township Rep

Ron Villerius

(##) = year of re-election to the board

Contact Information: Members may contact the board at the above phone numbers or leave a message at 457-4398 or info@jenisonhistory.org

Historical Association of Michigan

Find us on the registry at

www.hsmichigan.org



Jenison Historical Association
PO Box 664
Jenison, MI 49429

2014 Meeting Schedule

Board meetings are all open to the public and are held on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at 6:45 PM at the Georgetown Library, unless noted. No meeting in the month of December.

All meetings begin at 6:45 PM unless noted

Call to volunteer your time at the open houses

2014 Museum Open House Schedule

March 15, 2014	2-4 PM	Quilts Old and New
April 19, 2014	2-4 PM	
May 17, 2014	2-4 PM	Jenison Electric Park
June 21, 2014	2-4 PM	
July 19, 2014	Noon - 2PM	Grand Lady Riverboat Tour
	2:30 - 4 PM	Museum Open
Sept. 20, 2014	2-4 PM	Glimpses of early Hudsonville
October 18, 2014	2-4 PM	
December 6, 2014	1-4 PM	Christmas at the Jenison Museum
January 10, 2014	2-4 PM	

ALSO: 1st Tuesday of the month April thru November -
10 AM - Noon